reference to the latter's preliminary proposal for merger of IBP Co. Limited with it. Final approval of the Government in this regard will depend on the detailed scheme of amalgamation.

Availability of petrol and gas in Himalayas

†544. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards distinct possibilities of availability of petrol and gas in the Himalayas as per the conclusion of scientists after analyzing data collected from the Himalayas; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the expenditure likely to be incurred on the same and the time period of the said programme and by when success is likely to be achieved?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) have been carrying out exploration activities for oil & gas in the Himalayan region since its inception in 1956 but without any commercial success so far. ONGC continues to acquire geo-scientific data in the Himalayas with the aim of identifying prospective areas. In addition, Oil India Ltd. (OIL) is also carrying out its exploration activities in the Himalayan foothills since 1990.

(b) Exploration for hydrocarbons has been carried out in the lower Himalayan Foothills, lying to the south and south east of the mountainous Himalayan Region and in Karewa basin (in the Kashmir Valley).

ONGC since inception (as on 1.10.2004) has acquired 8,027 Ground Line Kilometre (GLK) of 2D seismic data and drilled 18 wells in the Himalayan foothills and Karewa basin in the Himalayan region, but without any commercial success so far. However, ONGC is pursuing its exploration activities to get a breakthrough in these areas.

Presently, ONGC is holding three Petroleum Exploration Licenses (PELs), two in the State of Himachal Pradesh and one in the State of Jammu & Kashmir. During 2004-05, ONGC has planned 2D seismic acquisition in the exploration block HF-ONN-2001/1, awarded under New Exploration Licensing Policy III(NELP-III). OIL is operating in two PEL areas. 6,171 GLK of 2D seismic data has been acquired as on 31.3.2004. One exploratory well was drilled near Bilaspur, in which presence of hydrocarbon was indicated, but without commercial discovery.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

During Tenth Plan period, ONGC and OIL have planned to invest about Rs. 77.30 crore and Rs. 89 crore respectively.

Exploration is a continuous and dynamic process under which while inputs are deterministic but the outcome probablistic in nature. As a result, no fixed time frame can be given.

Domestic production of oil

†545. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for domestic production of oil through coastal and off shore drilling in the Ninth Five Year Plan and target achieved for the same;

(b) the target fixed for Tenth Five Year Plan;

(c) the latest position of availability of gas and oil in the country as per the present requirement of the same; and

(d) the total amount required for exploitation of resources by the end of Tenth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The targets set for production of crude oil by the National Oil Companies, *viz.*, Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Oil India Limited (OIL) as well as the projection for crude oil production by Private companies/Joint Ventures (Pvt/JVs) during the 9th Five Year Plan period and the actual performance against them is given below:

[in Million Metric Tonnes (MMT)]

	Onshore		Offshore		Total	
Company	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
ONGC	50.73	41.47	94.17	87.58	144.89	129.05
OIL	16.47	16.10	—	—	16.47	16.10
Pvt/JV	—*	0.36	—*	17.44	19.46**	17.80

Note:

* No projection by Pvt/JVs was made for oil production from onshore and offshore areas separately.

** Projection for oil production in 9th Five Year Plan period for fields/blocks operated by Pvt/JVs in onshore and offshore areas was 19.46 MMT.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.